

Xin. ENGLAND AND GERMANY REARM

The year 1935 opened under relatively favourable auspices. Russia had entered the League with the approval of England and France; the tension between Yugoslavia and Hungary arising out of the murder of King Alexander at Marseilles had been allayed by its good offices; and the dangers involved in the Saar plebiscite, after fifteen years of separation from Germany, were averted by the timely despatch of British and other disinterested troops to the district with the approval of all parties concerned. In the first week of the new year Laval visited Rome, and the ill-will between the Latin sisters which had existed since the close of the war was partially dispelled. The reconciliation embodied in the colonial agreements of January 8, implementing the promise to Italy made in 1915, was welcomed by Great Britain, the friend of both, for its relation to the Abyssinian problem was still obscure,

At the beginning of February Laval visited London, and the results of the discussions were embodied in the Anglo-French Declaration of February 3. The two Powers sketched out a plan for the further stabilization of Europe on the basis of three regional pacts. A West European Air Pact of mutual assistance was to be made by the Locarno Powers—Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Belgium. The Locarno Treaty pledged us to join France or Germany in resisting unprovoked aggression, but neither Power gave a corresponding pledge to us. The proposal was thus a reiteration and extension of the Locarno policy, equalizing obligations in the particular field where the danger had rapidly grown. The second plan, originally suggested by Barithou in June 1934 and popularly known as an Eastern Locarno, contemplated a mutual guarantee of the existing frontiers

between Russia,
Poland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Finland and
the Baltic
States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania). A third
project was
designed to secure the independence and
integrity of Austria,
which on two occasions in 1934 the British
Government had
formally declared a principle of British policy.
To spare her
pride, and to facilitate acceptance of the
obligation in certain
quarters, the Pact generalized the promise of
non-interference
to include other lands which were not
on the danger
list. Here was a bold and comprehensive
scheme sponsored
by the Western democracies with the approval
of Italy and
Russia. Great Britain only contemplated
signature of the
first, since she was neither an East European
nor a Central